

## Industry, Entertainment & Recreation

Due to its natural beauty, many people were attracted to Wells and Cannon Lakes. They came to relax at its many resorts and campgrounds, for steamboat rides and fishing, or to listen and dance to the Big Band sound at Jewett's Point Ballroom. They came to live here.

Before resorts and campgrounds were established however, many came to make a living by harnessing waterpower to saw lumber and grind grain. There were at least four gristmills operating on the stretch of water between Warsaw and Faribault by 1862; two in operation by 1855. Not relying on waterpower was the Humphrey Elevator Company who set up shop on the south side of Cannon Lake.

As we continue to step back in time, before 1850, the Cannon and Wells Lake area was the domain of the Dakota people. The Cannon River made for easy travel and provided food. At least three known Dakota villages have been identified on the shores of the lakes. Furtraders like Alexander Faribault and his brother-in-law Bully Wells moved in to provide goods to the Natives in exchange for their pelts from furbearing animals.



James "Bully" Wells  
& Jane Graham Wells



### James "Bully" Wells

A very interesting and colorful figure, James "Bully" Wells, came to this area from the Frontenac area to set up his last of four trading posts. Wells married Jane Duncan at Fort Snelling in the 1830s. She was sister to Alexander Faribault's wife Elizabeth and daughter of famous British Lieutenant Duncan Graham. Duncan fought

against Zachary Taylor in the War of 1812.

Before setting up and operating their Frontenac trading post for 17 years, Wells traded with the Dakota at Chaska and at Okaman on the east side of present-day Lake Elysian.

By the late 1850s, the furtrade was past and perhaps due to age, Wells started farming at his trading post. In spite of his age, he still had a wanderlust. Bully died in 1864 by Natives in South Dakota.



## Rice County Historical Society

1814 NW 2nd Avenue, Faribault, MN 55021  
507-332-2121 [www.rchistory.org](http://www.rchistory.org)

### Rice County Historical Society - Since 1926!

RGHS was founded in 1926 with the mission of "Discovery, preservation and dissemination of the knowledge of the history of Rice County."

Located on the east side of the Rice Co. Fairgrounds, RGHS continues to collect and share county history through museum buildings, exhibits, research, and education. Signature programs include History Camp, one-room schoolhouse and log cabin experiences for youth, school tours, workshops and public programs.

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Doc's Dock, Warsaw, MN

**Cannon River Kayak Tour**  
From King Mill to Bully Wells



# Points of Interest

**H.H. King Mill (1862)** King Mill Park is home to Gold Mine flour and names like King, Bean, and Sheffield. The waterpower at this site was first harnessed by Alexander Faribault in 1862. The mill burned in 1975.

**Hugo Velzke Gravel Pit** Some of the finest masonry sand around was sifted out of Hugo's gravel pit to make concrete for block basements. Located next to Camp Canine Kennels.

**Graham's Mill (1856)** Faribault's earliest gristmill on the Cannon River. Graham was a neighbor and friend of Bully Wells.

**Bully Wells Fur Trading Post (1855)** This property was the site of the last of furtrading posts that Wells and his wife Jane set up in Minnesota. A rough character, Bully's name lives on!



**Velzke Park** Delmer Velzke donated the land for this little park on the north shore of Wells Lake.

**Jewett's Point Resort/Ballroom (1877)** Jewett's was a popular resort and later a ballroom and entertainment hotspot. Torn down in 1977.

**Channel Inn (1948)** Located across the Canon from Doc's Dock is the Channel Inn. Over the years, this spot has been the location of a general store and Orcutt's Supper Club. The Channel Inn offers food, drinks and entertainment.



Doc's Dock, 1950s

**Doc's Dock Campground (1958)** At one time, Warsaw had three campgrounds. Doc's was sandwiched between St. Martin's and Willing's Campgrounds. Doc's is the last one, and lives on with new owners Brian and Lori Schultz who offer a family-style campground RV park. This campground is next to some of the best fishing in the area.



**Shattuck Point** Once owned by Shattuck School, this acreage was a summer camp in the late 1800s. Annual sailboat regattas and rowing contests with other schools were held here on the lake.

**Humphrey Manlift (1886)** Seth Humphrey invented the first manlift elevator which was a boon to tall flour mills in the late 1800s. It continues to be the only manufacturer in the world.

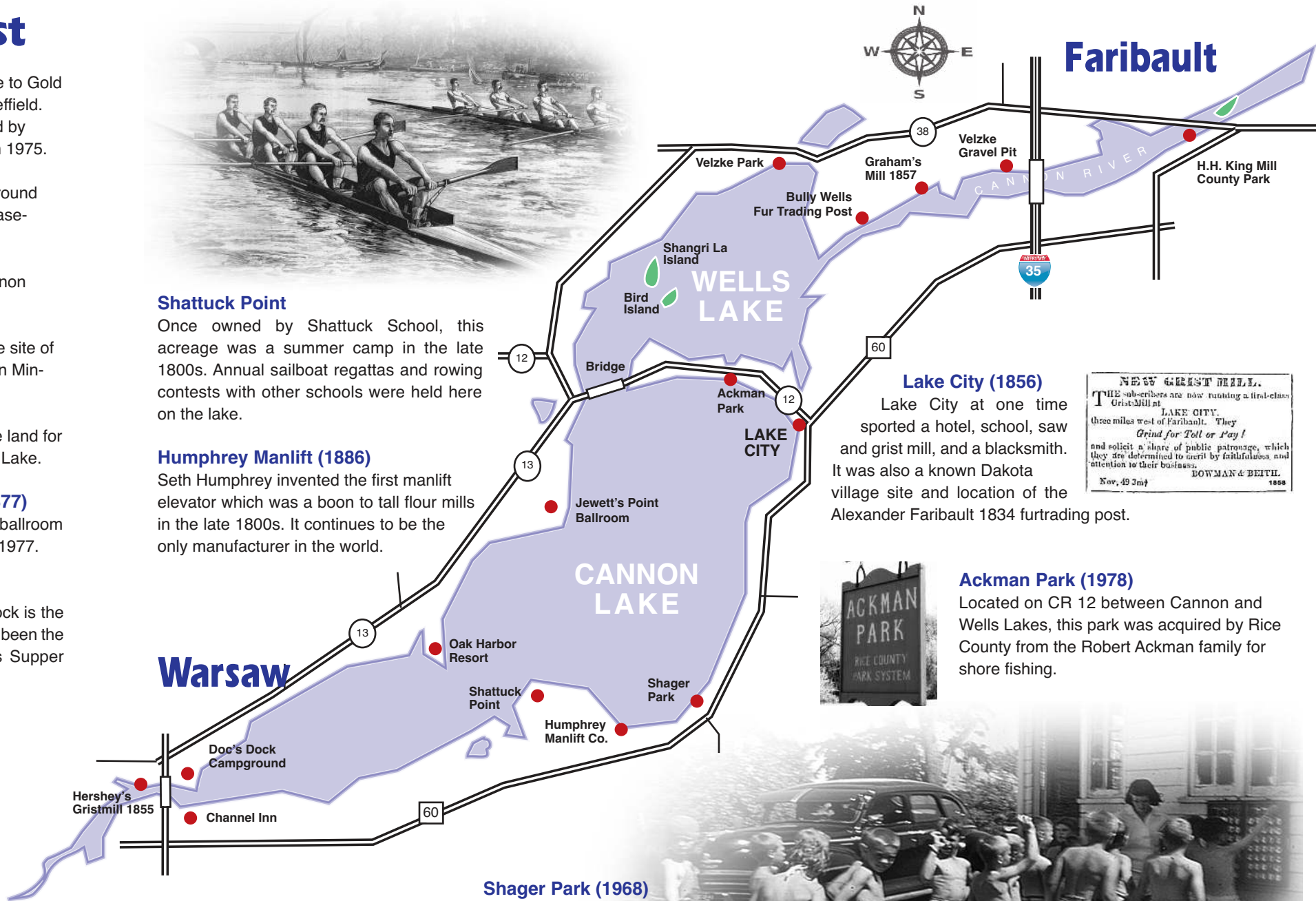
## Warsaw

Hershey's Gristmill 1855  
Doc's Dock Campground  
Channel Inn

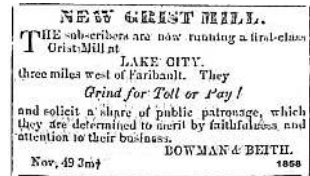
**Shager Park (1968)** This park, known as "Malibu," has always been a popular public swimming hole during hot weather months. More recently, the Park has been enlarged and turned into an official county park offering a boat launch, access to the Sakatah-Singing Hills Trail, and top notch picnic facilities.



Shager Park, 1960s



**Lake City (1856)** Lake City at one time sported a hotel, school, saw and grist mill, and a blacksmith. It was also a known Dakota village site and location of the Alexander Faribault 1834 furtrading post.



**Ackman Park (1978)** Located on CR 12 between Cannon and Wells Lakes, this park was acquired by Rice County from the Robert Ackman family for shore fishing.